

Military housing privatization program comes to Bliss

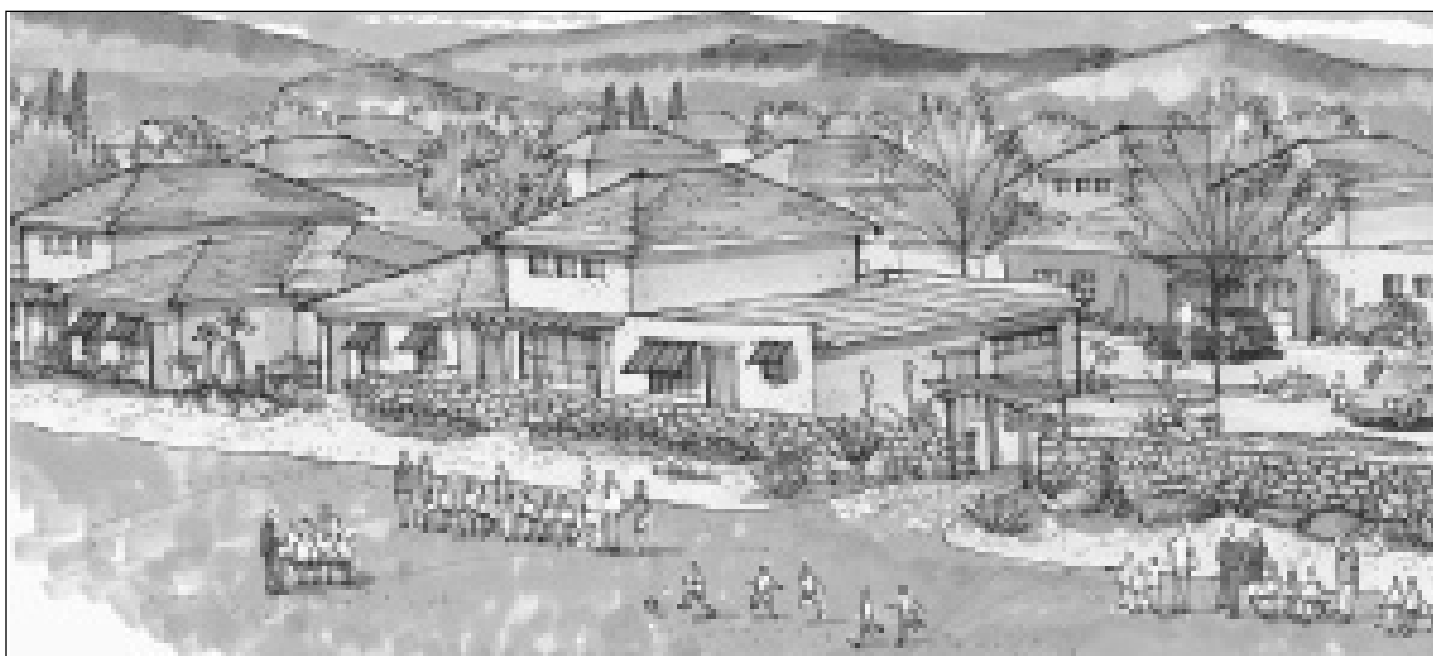
DIANE BORGES

GMH Military Housing

In February 1996, President Clinton signed into law the Military Housing Privatization Initiative, which provides the military services with alternative authorities for construction and improvement of military family housing. Under these authorities, the services are provided a way to maximize their limited housing construction funds, government-owned land and existing facilities to encourage private sector developers' to invest and to assume these responsibilities, all in an effort to improve the quality of life for Soldiers and their families.

Prior to this legislation and with such budgetary constraints for housing, the military could not afford to upkeep, renovate and replace existing housing or build any new housing for the increased number of Soldiers and their families. As Soldiers and their families know, most homes are 50+ years old and in great need of repair. There is also a shortage of housing at many installations causing many families to find housing off the base. Privatizing family housing will enable private sector developers to repair, renovate, replace and build new family housing, which develop new communities, as soon as they take over. Improvements will be seen immediately.

The Residential Communities Initiative is the program developed



ARTIST RENDERING OF FORT BLISS FAMILY HOUSING COMMUNITY

and managed by the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Installations and Environment), on behalf of the Secretary of the Army to pursue the privatization of Army military family housing and solve the Army's serious family housing issues. RCI is dedicated to building quality residential communities. Under RCI, the Army establishes long-term business relationships with private sector developers for the purpose of improving military family housing communities. The Army will provide the developers long-term interest in both land and family housing facilities. The source of financial return for the developers is the revenue generated

from the rents paid by the military personnel.

Private sector developers submit very detailed development proposals for review and approval. OASA (I&E) awarded the Fort Bliss RCI project to GMH Military Housing, LLC (GMH). Fort Bliss has partnered with GMH for the purpose of improving the military family housing community, utilizing applicable legislative authorities and the provision of the Army's RCI Program to enter into a 50 year ground lease agreement and partnership. GMH Military Housing-Fort Bliss/White Sands LLC will be responsible for the development, construction, maintenance and manage-

ment of family housing at Fort Bliss.

The Army's RCI program is designed to eliminate inadequate family housing and provide the Soldiers and their families with housing communities equal to, if not better than, those non-military housing developments. This program is giving the Services the opportunity to provide better homes and communities faster than the traditional military construction methods. It attracts quality developers and ensures that the military families receive quality homes and services at the best cost.

Questions can be directed to the RCI office located at 1741 Marshall Road or by phone at 568-5309.

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